Shri S. Gopalan, former Union Labour Secretary. The Committee is studying the feasibility aspects of the implementation of the Scheme. Since it is not an obligatory activity of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, interministerial consultation and consultation with the social partners is required. In such circumstances, it is not possible to indicate the precise time-frame for implementation of the scheme though efforts are being made to launch the scheme at the earliest.

Beedi workers in A.P.

2298. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are more than seven lakh beedi wor1<ers in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether Government have extended any welfare schemes for such workers particularly in the fields of housing and social security; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) There are about 44 lakh beedi workers in the country, out of which 6.25 lakh beedi workers are in Andhra Pradesh.

(b) and (c) The Government is running a number of welfare schemes for the welfare of beedi workers in the fields of health, social security, housing, education and recreation throughout the country including Andhra Pradesh. Under the Integrated Housing Scheme for beedi workers, financial assistance of Rs. 20,000/- per unit is given to the worker as subsidy. Under Group Insurance Scheme for beedi workers claim amount is Rs. 10,000/- for natural death, Rs. 25,000/- in case of accidental death/permanent disability due to an accident and Rs. 12,500/- on partial permanent disability due to an accident. The workers are entitled for free treatment in dispensaries/hospitals run by Labour Welfare Organization. In major diseases like cancer, heart diseases, kidney transplantation, the workers are reimbursed the amount incurred on treatment on these

diseases as per schemes. The wards of the beedi workers are also given financial assistance for their education. During April to September 2002, 305381 patients were treated and Rs. 31 lakh (approx.) was spent on their health care. Educational assistance of Rs. 83.75 lakh was given to children of beedi workers and a subsidy of Rs. 29 lakh was sanctioned to construct 295 houses.

Unemployed educated youth

2299. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have assessed the number of unemployed educated youth particularly the Graduates and Post Graduates in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof, district-wise; and

(c) what steps the Central and State Government have take to provide employment to the unemployed youth of the State within a timeframe?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) The number of graduate and post-graduate job-seekers, all of whom are "not necessarily unemployed on the live register of employment exchanges in Andhra Pradesh as on 31.10.2002 was of the order of 3.2 lakh and 0.48 lakh respectively, district-wise information is not maintained.

(c) The approach to Tenth Plan focuses on providing gainful high quality employment to the additions to the labour force and it is listed as one of the monitorable objectives for the tenth Plan and beyond. The growth strategy of tenth Plan would lay emphasis on rapid growth of those sectors which are likely to create high quality employment opportunities and deal with the policy constraints which discourage growth of employment. Particular attention would be paid to the policy environment influencing a wide range of economic activities, which have a large employment potential. This will help in providing employment to the educated youth of the country including Andhra Pradesh.